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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA 45ª SESSIONE DELLA CONFERENZA GENERALE DELL'AGENZIA INTERNAZIONALE DELL'ENERGIA ATOMICA (AIEA)

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Dal 17 al 21 settembre 2001 si è svolta a Vienna la 45ª sessione della Conferenza Generale dell'Agenzia Internazionale dell'Energia Atomica (AIEA). Il 18 settembre Mons. Leo Boccardi, Rappresentante Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'AIEA, è intervenuto sul punto 8 dell'agenda *General debate and Annual Report 2000*. Pubblichiamo qui di seguito il testo dell'intervento:

• INTERVENTO DI MONS. LEO BOCCARDI

Mr President,

First allow me to express the warmest congratulations of the Delegation of the Holy See on your election to the presidency of this 45th General Conference. At the same time we would like to express our gratitude to the Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei and the Secretariat for the preparation of this Conference and their dedicated service to the Agency. Finally, we would also like to extend our best wishes to all members of the Bureau. Your work and the co-operation of all Delegations augur well for the success of this Conference.

The consequences of the recent tragic events in the United States of America still weigh heavily upon this Conference. These horrible crimes have been condemned by the entire civilized world, which has demonstrated deep-felt solidarity with all the innocent victims.

Mr President, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The IAEA's efforts to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy are situated within the larger context of international co-operation. This means that all our decisions can make a contribution to the wider processes which affect the life of the international community in the continued quest for necessary practical collaboration between its various actors. What happens from day to day in our communities and in particular those situations which give rise to forms of open conflict make us ever more aware that only agreed action between peoples and nations can ensure that the objective of peaceful coexistence is attained.

This collaboration, however, calls for the specification of ideas, programmes and political choices capable of responding to effective needs and real possibilities in the various sectors (cf. *Gaudium et spes*, 85-86). Moreover, the commitment to set aside the necessary resources for training and ensuring that knowledge and technology are made more widely available remains a priority. This requires action capable of bridging the gap caused by different levels of development which on the economic level and on that of political effectiveness violate the genuine meaning of the fundamental principle of equality of political communities which is one of the foundations of contemporary international law (cf. *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 39).

Mr President,

My Delegation has read with pleasure the Annual Report 2000 of the Agency prepared by the Board of Governors and the Technical Co-operation Report for 2000 presented by the Director General. Among many achievements and successes of the Agency in the last year in its different fields of activity I would like to draw attention to the fact that the technical co-operation programme for the biennium 2001-2002 was finalized and that in this programme there is a significant shift in the priorities of Member States. In contrast to previous years, in the new biennium programme (2001-2002) the interest has shifted towards assistance in solving national development problems. Member States are more and more attentive to the potential of applying nuclear technology in development projects in such areas as safety (radiation safety, nuclear safety and radioactive waste safety – 21% of all programmes), human health (19%) and food and agriculture (15%).

This shift in priorities certainly does not undermine the importance of other programmes of the Agency aimed at fostering physical and chemical sciences, the use of nuclear power, water resources management and other areas. All these areas of interest are vital for the Agency and we are hopeful that they will continue to be supported by Member States as well. The Agency has gained a fine reputation through such programmes and thus deserves full appreciation and recognition.

Mr President,

Resolution Number 18 of the 44th General Conference of the Agency (GC(44)/Res/18) emphasized that programmes of the Agency should contribute to a greater achievement of projects for sustainable development in developing countries, particularly in least developed ones. With special pleasure we read in the Technical Co-operation Report 2000 that the Agency has strengthened its co-operation with major national development plans and activities of many least developed countries with the aim of eliminating the roots of poverty and underdevelopment. This approach should continue to be pursued in order to alleviate the growing social inequalities in the world and reduce the gap between rich and poor nations which has been steadily growing in recent years. We all belong to one human family which becomes more and more interdependent. Since globalization, for all its risks, also offers new opportunities, it is much easier today, in a spirit of solidarity, to assist and support the least developed countries in designing and implementing programmes which will enable them to take their future in hand. As the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, stated it in his Message for the World Day of Peace this year: "The present reality of global interdependence makes it easier to appreciate the common destiny of the entire human family, and makes all thoughtful people increasingly appreciate the virtue of solidarity" (No. 19)

This new century will surely present us all with many opportunities and means to cooperate ever more fully in a spirit of solidarity.

Such a vision of international co-operation, which places man and his personal dignity at its centre, affects our Organization's role and activity, and enables it to evaluate its programmes in the wider context of the international debate on development. This is an essential contribution that the IAEA could make, with a view also to the meeting to which the international community is called at the scheduled Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 10) to be held next year.

Mr President,

Allow me to draw the attention of the distinguished Delegations to another area of activities of the Agency that the Holy See very much values. My Delegation was heavily involved in the International Conference on Radiological Protection, held in Spain (Malaga, 26-30 March 2001) earlier this year, and was deeply honoured to chair an important round table discussion on the issue of radiation protection for those who comfort and care for patients.

Those who dedicate themselves to such charitable assistance shall be well protected. Sometimes they are patients' relatives, thus their exposure to radiation is of comparatively short duration, but many are also members of religious and other charity organisations and devote their whole life to this admirable task. We have to do all possible to protect these people.

I would like to express my deep desire that the Agency will continue to participate in efforts to place nuclear energy at the service of sustainable and durable development and the well-being of the entire human family.

Thank you, Mr President.

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